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Ireland Since the Larne Gun-running

*A Chapter of
Contemporary History*

— By —

John J. O'Gorman, D.C.L.

*With a Foreword by
Bishop Fallon*



LONDON, CANADA
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Ireland Since the Larne Gun-running

FOREWORD

The selfishness, cant, hypocrisy, and humbug of the Governments of the Allied and victorious Powers are putting a severe strain on the loyalty of millions of men who did their full duty in their various spheres during the late War. To maintain that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, to protect small nationalities, to establish the supremacy of Right over Might and Brute Force created and sustained that marvellous spirit which, persevering through trials indescribable and woes unutterable, finally drove the armies of Germany to irretrievable defeat. Have the results of victory verified or vindicated our lofty principles? The shame of Shantung, and the theft of liberty from Persia and Egypt, the crucifixion of Armenia, the anchoring of the Turk on the Bosphorus, and the enslavement of Ireland furnish only a partial though a most discreditable answer to the question. The Peace Conference of Versailles of 1919, sank immeasurably below the Congress of Vienna of 1815 in undisguised and indefensible trickery, dishonesty and deceit.

For many of us the case of Ireland is the worst. But, conceivably, that may be so only because blood is thicker than water. One thing, however, is certain. The disillusionment that has followed the War is engendering in many minds a new orientation of thought regarding the political fabric to which had been given the name of "British Commonwealth" and more lately, of "Community of British Nations". They have about come to the conclusion that all the high-sounding phrases which hurried them headlong into the World War were but hollow and shameless mockery, signifying nothing.

As that staunch Englishman Philip Gibbs, well says in his latest book, "Now It Can Be Told."—"Appeals for the rescue of 'the little nations' struck old chords of chivalry and sentiment—though with a strange lack of logic and sincerity, Irish demand for self-government was unheeded"; and, to talk of loving liberty is, "a blatant hypocrisy on the part of a nation which denied self-government to Ireland."

If, in this twentieth century, British statesmanship can offer to Ireland no more acceptable form of government than a huge army of occupation and armoured cars and tanks and bombing planes and machine guns, with the accompanying violation of every fundamental principle of the Great Charter, then British statesmanship is bankrupt, and we in Canada may well feel deeply grateful that our rights and liberties are safeguarded by three thousand miles of sea. I have never been an advocate of an Irish Republic, but I am quite satisfied that an Irish Republic would be a more decent and a more defensible thing than the present form of British administration in that island, or than the humbug Home Rule Bill which is now before the British Parliament.

In the pamphlet to which these few lines are a Foreword, the Reverend Dr. O'Gorman gives a dispassionate review of the last eight years of Ireland's history which is a complete refutation of charges based on suppressed truths, suggested falsehoods, and plain malicious lies. It is a concise, accurate, yet comprehensive statement of facts. It ought to be welcome to every man who loves truth, cherishes liberty, and longs to see broadened out the boundaries of freedom.

✠ MICHAEL FRANCIS FALLON,
BISHOP OF LONDON.

April 30th, 1920

IRELAND SINCE THE LARNE GUN-RUNNING

A Chapter of Contemporary History

(A lecture delivered in St. Patrick's Parish Hall, Ottawa,
16th March, 1920.)

One of the greatest Englishmen of the nineteenth century has told us: "Truth is never enforced except at the sacrifice of its propounders. At least they expose their inherent imperfections, if they incur no other penalty; for nothing would be done at all, if a man waited till he could do it so well, that no one could find fault with it." This is my only defence for accepting the invitation of the parish priest of St. Patrick's, Rev. Father Whelan, to tell you the truth about the Ireland of today.

PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF IRELAND

Claiming no qualifications for the task save honesty of purpose and such sympathy and insight as may result from Irish blood, and from that personal knowledge of the land, language and people of Ireland which has come from long study and oft repeated visits, I will endeavour, this

St. Patrick's eve, to sketch Ireland's political history since the Orange gun-running at Larne, in April 1914. I hold no brief for any party in Ireland. I am neither a Unionist, Nationalist, nor Sinn Feiner. I am a Canadian. Canada is my nation, and under the King, I owe and own allegiance to none other. The ties which bind me, and most other Canadians of Irish blood, to Ireland, are profound but they are not political. Ireland I look upon as a sister nation quite as capable as Canada of managing her own affairs.

FIRST PRINCIPLES ASSUMED

Three assumptions, as regards the Irish question, and only three, underlie this historic sketch. As I wish to be frank with you, I will tell you them in advance. My first assumption is: "Ireland is an island." Geography bears witness to that fact. It sounds a truism, but in any big question it is always the truisms that are denied. It follows that, since Ireland is an island, Ulster, no matter how you delineate it, is part of Ireland. My second assumption is: "Ireland is inhabited by the Irish people." The history of the last nineteen centuries bears witness to that fact. There have been immigrants, of course, but if not in a few years, at least in a few generations, the immigrants invariably became Irishmen. The 100,000 Irish Protestant volunteers of 1782 knew no country save Ireland, and no race save the Irish race, though their remote ancestors hailed chiefly from Scotland or England. That the national unity of Ireland should be disrupted to please a religious minority (and apart from Belfast, Protestants are in a minority even in Ulster) is a preposterous idea. The fact that there is in Ireland, as there has been in every other subject nation in history, a minority planted there by the conqueror, enjoying political ascendancy and opposed to the national aspirations, does not change the fact that this minority in Ireland is Irish and hence part of the Irish nation. My third and last assumption is this: "The Irish people, like every other civilized nation, has the right of national self-determination." That is a truth of international ethics, a truth in defence of which the World-War was fought. Therefore, Ireland's abstract right to self-determination is unanswerable. How Ireland can and how Ireland should exercise this right of national self-determination are problems, not for us, but for the Irish people to decide. We may think their decision wise or unwise, but

we cannot deny that the decision be theirs. For liberty is nothing else than the power to choose.

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

Three different decisions are proposed by three parties in Ireland, and a fourth is in some danger of being imposed by the prime minister of Great Britain, these are unionism, home rule, republicanism, and partition. The first proposal is: "Maintain the present union with Great Britain." Most of the Protestants of Ireland, unlike their Irish ancestors of the time of Gratton and Wolfe Tone, want this legislative union with England. The handful of Irish Catholics who are opposed to democracy, agree with the Unionists. The union can be maintained only by bayonets, machine guns, tanks and aeroplanes. It is a denial of the principle of national liberty. The second proposal is: "Home Rule." Realising the economic and other advantages that would accrue to Ireland had she, relative to the Empire, the political position of Canada or Australia, four-fifths of the Irish people during the past two generations worked for Home Rule. They were then willing to accept a meagre measure of Home Rule as a start, but today nothing less than Dominion Home Rule would be considered. The third proposal is: "An Irish Republic." There is nothing sinful or inherently wrong in this. The loyal and Imperialist Ottawa Journal wrote a month ago. "Any man whose ideal is the independence of Canada has an ideal noble enough to warrant allegiance and call for respect if he avows it." (Editorial of Feb. 18.) What is a noble ideal in Canada cannot be an ignoble ideal in Ireland. Both in Canada and in Ireland, it may, as I believe, not be the best practical policy for our generation—and this generation can speak only for itself. But others may hold a different view, and these Irish or Canadian republicans have as much right to their political views as Mr. Ross and I have to ours. In the General Election held after the War was won, Ireland, as a protest against the denial of her national claims, elected 78 Republicans out of a parliamentary representation of 105. That action, occurring when the victorious British Empire was at the zenith of its military power, was the greatest moral defeat the Empire has received since the American Declaration of Independence. That the majority of the Irish people consider a Republic preferable to the present union with its inevitable martial law, may be reasonably concluded. What proportion of the people of Ireland would consider the hypothetical possibility of an Irish Republic preferable to the practical reality of Dominion Home Rule, if they were actually offered the latter, is a question for which there is not sufficient data to answer correctly. The fourth policy—"partition"—is advocated by

no party in Ireland. The majority even of the Protestants of Ireland abhor it. It is proposed by that political opportunist who after the world fought five years for principles is now ready to throw these principles to the winds and for political advantages keep the Turk in Europe and establish a Protestant Ghetto in North-East Ireland. How these four policies, unionism, home rule, republicanism and partition, and a greater question than any of them, the World-War, have affected the political history of Ireland since 1914, is a drama in comparison with which the plays of Sophocles and Shakespeare are minor masterpieces. For it is no mere Oedipus Rex or Hamlet who is torn by conflicting duties and passions, but the oldest self-conscious nation of Northern Europe.

DEATH BLOW TO CONSTITUTIONALISM

The opening act of this tragedy—for it has all the greatness and sadness of a tragedy—began in 1912, two years before the War. The 750 year struggle of the Irish nation against its English invaders ended on the eve of a pacific settlement. A position as an autonomous nation within the British Empire seemed promised Ireland by the very moderate Home Rule Bill that was passing through the British Parliament. It was felt by all that if a united Ireland obtained even this meagre amount of autonomy under a national parliament, the future would evolve itself. It was at this moment that constitutional agitation and British parliamentary prestige received what soon proved to be their death blow in Ireland by the reintroduction into Irish history of the old, old method of physical force. For on September 28, 1912, 215,000 Ulstermen over sixteen years of age signed a Solemn League and Covenant to refuse to recognize the authority of a Home Rule Parliament. The Orangemen began to arm against the British Parliament. A year later, in September 1913, the Central Authority of the Provisional Government of Ulster was formed, with the Ulster Volunteer Force as its army. This revolutionary body had 16 Earls, Marquises and Viscounts on its Personnel Board and was supported in its preparations for civil war by the Tory Party of England, who feared if democracy went northward across the Boyne, it might advance eastward across the Irish Sea. The possibility of actual civil war was not considered to be real, as the officer class of the British Army, being semi-aristocratic, was honeycombed with Ulster treason to Parliament. This fact was made known to the world and duly noted in Berlin, when the Curragh Cavaliers, led by General Gough, refused, March 20, 1914, to go to Ulster to fight for King or Parliament.

ASCENDANCY CONSPIRATORS

Things had come to a pretty pass. The English junkers, to protect their ascendancy in England, helped to organise the ascendancy class in Ireland for civil war, and induced the aristocratic officer class to connive in their armed defiance of Parliament and of democracy. The Cecils and Somersets of England saw that their cause was identical with that of the Lansdowne's, Londonderry's and Abercorn's of Ireland. That the world might know how impotent the British Parliament was, even after those democratic Irish had got the House of Lords' Veto abolished, the ascendancy class of England and of Ulster, with the connivance of the British Army and Navy, seized the roads and telegraph wires, held up the custom officials and the police, and landed at Larne, Bangor and Donaghadee, 35,000 German Rifles and 2½ million rounds of ammunition. This occurred on April 24, 1914. The officer in charge of this "unprecedented outrage" against the British Parliament was Major F. Crawford, who publicly stated: "If they were put out of the Union . . . he would infinitely prefer to change his allegiance right over to the Emperor of Germany."

INFLUENCE ON WAR DECISION

No wonder then, as Ambassador Gerard assures us, that the preparations for civil war in Ireland were a contributory factor in deciding the Kaiser to start the War. Meanwhile, the success with which the Orangemen had armed against the British Parliament had electrified the rest of Ireland. All through the nineteenth century, Ireland, though nominally united on an equal footing to England, was treated as a conquered country, the inhabitants of which might not have either militia or arms. Carson's Volunteers had however won for one corner and one party in Ireland, this primary right of a citizen—the right to bear arms in defence of his country.

LOGIC OF THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS

Hence almost spontaneously, under the guidance of a group of Irish Irelanders headed by Eoin MacNeill, one of the co-founders of the Gaelic League, the mere Irish founded in November 1913, the Irish Volunteers. The English Government which had allowed the Orangemen to arm now forbade the importation of arms into Ireland. The Irish Volunteers smuggled some arms in and began to drill. It is a mistake to suppose that the Irish Volunteers were, like Carson's, a sectarian organization. It is only the enemies of Ireland who are sectarian. Irish national movements are always organized on a non-sectarian basis. Ire-

land has religious liberty. She has not political liberty. Hence she organizes on a broad national basis. The Volunteer movement put a new spirit into Ireland. "We are about to attempt impossible things," said Patrick Pearse prophetically, "for we know that it is only the impossible things that are worth doing." The Irish Volunteers were not organized to fight the Orangemen. They were organized for the defence of Ireland from internal or external aggression. "It is the duty and dignity of Christian manhood to bear arms," wrote Joseph Plunkett, "as he who has the power to found a family must have in himself the power to defend a family." Ireland was naked of defence. The British Army in Ireland was not an army of defence, but an army of occupation, and was so described in official documents. "It is in Ireland not to defend the nation against invaders, but to defend the Government against the nation," said Professor Tom Kettle, who died on the Western Front. "Ireland needs 100,000 Volunteers to defend her, lest the Germans should invade her," wrote the G. O. C. of the Irish Volunteers, Col. Moore, on February 1914: and speaking of enemies nearer home, he added: "Let there be no abuse of Ulstermen, who indeed have shown a spirit of independence which we ought to emulate. It is the English Tories who are our enemies, not the Orangemen whom they are using for their own purpose." Eoin MacNeill, the guiding spirit of the Irish Volunteers, and a clear-headed Ulsterman, said bluntly and prophetically: "If we are to be ruled by force it must not be by latent force. The onlooking world must see right into the performance." The world is still looking on at the sorry spectacle of British martial law in Ireland.

PROPHETIC ?

The Irish Volunteers were delighted that the Ulster Volunteers had rendered the British Parliament impotent north of the Boyne. "There were brave doings in Ulster this week past," wrote the Irish Volunteer of May 2, with reference to the Larne gun-running, adding the practical reflection: "What a pity of it to think that the young manhood of Ulster is being trained as soldiers to resist the consummation of the country's hopes. But everything changes, and perhaps the Orange Lodges who are now fighting to uphold the Act of Union that a century ago stunk in the nostrils of the Brotherhood may in time change back to their old opinions."

THE OLDER NATIONALISM AND SINN FEIN

John Redmond, who had relied through his life on the honesty of the British Parliament in seeking legislative liberty for Ireland, and who had looked askance at both

the Ulster and the Irish Volunteers, now joined the latter with the intention of directing them along constitutional lines. The Irish Volunteers were consequently, on the eve of war, under a Board that was half Nationalist and half Sinn Fein. The Nationalist Party needs no description. It failed to lead Ireland into the Land of Promise, it brought her to a greater degree of prosperity than the nation had ever experienced in all her history. The Sinn Fein movement is much less understood. It is necessary to distinguish the Sinn Fein movement or ideal from the Sinn Fein political party. There is a republican party in Ireland which has received and accepted the name of Sinn Fein. It did not exist in 1914 except as the disorganized and discredited remnant of Feinianism. Griffith's political Sinn Fein party, whose doctrine was that the Act of Union was illegal, was likewise at that time nearly negligible. But the Sinn Fein movement had transformed Ireland.

WHAT SINK FEIN REALLY MEANS

Sinn Fein does not mean "Ourselves Alone" nor does it denote "selfishness" or insularity. It means "Ourselves" and connotes national self-reliance and self-respect, with due dependence on the Creator. In its broadest sense it is the doctrine of true nationalism. It was preached by the prophet Isaiah over 700 years before Christ when he told that small nation, Judah, not to depend upon or ally itself with the great empire of Assyria, or the great Empire of Egypt. "In quiet and in confidence shall be your strength." Under God they were to trust themselves. In Ireland, Sinn Fein meant that an Irishman should learn or speak his own language, play his own games, cultivate his own music, take pride in his own history, support his own industries and have confidence in himself and his own nation. It now meant that he should also defend his own country. In politics if necessarily opposed anglicisation and anti-national imperialism, but, according to the necessities of the day, it could as easily support Dominion Home Rule as Republicanism. Far from being insular it wished to restore to Ireland her continental trade and affiliations. That witty but heterodox Irishman, Bernard Shaw, has truly said that the English of Sinn Fein is John Bull. The movement was and is undenominational.

AT LARNE AND AT HOWTH

The first results of the revolutionary Orange gun-running at Larne, was the Irish gun-running at Howth on July 26, 1914. Instead of the British army and Navy conniving at it as in the North, troops were called out, who, though they failed to get the guns from the Volunteers, shot without warning into an unarmed and largely inof-

fensive crowd of civilians at Bachelor's Walk, Dublin, wounding several and killing one woman and two men. The Dublin City Council denounced the action of the soldiers as a "savage crime." A week later Europe was at war.

AN INTERVIEW WITH EOIN MACNEILL

Exactly one week after England entered the War I was in Dublin and had an hour's interview with Eoin MacNeill, the founder of the Irish Volunteers. He discussed in the Irish language, very frankly, both the Irish and international situation. I had known him since I met him in the Middle Island of Aran in 1904, when he was perfecting his knowledge of Irish and I beginning mine. He told me that about the middle of July he was confidentially informed through an Austrian source that the German Kaiser had determined on war. Redmond was on the eve of going to the Buckingham Palace Conference. Professor MacNeill said "I immediately asked my informant: Does John Redmond know this? and was told that he did." The conference, as is well known, failed, as Carson would not agree to any concessions, demanding that even two counties that had a Nationalist majority should be excluded from the Home Rule area.

On the question of Ireland's part in the War, Eoin MacNeill was likewise frank with me. He said: "All Ireland agreed with John Redmond's offer made on the eve of war. 'I say to the Government that they may withdraw every one of their troops from Ireland, and if it is allowed to us in comradeship with our brothers in the North, we will ourselves defend the coast of Ireland.' On the other hand," Professor MacNeill added, "I went to London and told John Redmond not to promise a single Irish soldier for foreign service till Ireland first actually got Home Rule, otherwise Ireland would be cheated. At this," he said, "John Redmond indignantly answered: Do you accuse me of betraying Ireland?" MacNeill's policy was to give a promise of soldiers for a promise of Home Rule, and actual soldiers for actual Home Rule. He and his Volunteers were opposed to partition.

BAD FAITH

John Redmond's offer that Ireland be entrusted with her own home defence, an offer with which the most advanced Sinn Feiners agreed, was refused by England. It was some six weeks after the War had been on, before the King signed the Home Rule Act, but it was immediately held up by a suspending Bill. Redmond considered that this scrap of paper with the royal signature was a sufficient guarantee of England's good faith and he and the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, came to Dublin on Sep-

tember 25th, and asked Ireland to fight in the British Army. Asquith, in a magnificent appeal for the rights of democracy and small nations, asked of Ireland, "The free will offering of a free people" and promised an Irish Army Corps. The promise was never implemented, though Ireland raised three divisions.

AN EXCRUCIATING DILEMMA

Consider now the position of the Irish nation in September 1914. Her position before the War was tragic enough. She had been on the eve of obtaining legislative autonomy and was thwarted of her right by the armed defiance of a section of her own people; for Orangemen are Irishmen. But with the outbreak of War, she was placed in an excruciating dilemma. Her national enemy England was, by a merciful dispensation of Providence, on the just side in the World-War. In this international conflict England's selfish interest and England's unselfish duty coincided. The substantial justice of the Allied Cause even increased as the war went on, for Turkey joined Germany, and the greatest democracy in the world replaced Czaristic Russia as our ally. Yet England remained as unjust as ever towards Ireland. The English Government not merely refused to free the one small nation in Europe it controlled, but actually refused to accept this semi-free nation as a national ally in the War. For if England accepted Ireland as a national ally in the War, she would necessarily have to accord her after the War, if not sooner, the rights of a nation. The Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, was merely oratorical when he asked Ireland for the "free gift of a free people"; later in the War his successor, with less rhetoric and more bluntness, proposed instead the conscription of an unfree people. From the beginning everything was done in recruiting appeals to flout and deny the ideal of Ireland a Nation. England wanted Irish soldiers to fight as "native levies," to use the cynically cruel phrase of a later Minister of War, Churchill; she did not want the Irish nation as an ally. Hence that section of the Irish people who were opposed to the national ideal were given every encouragement to feel that they were fighting for England and against Ireland. An Ulster Division, the 36th, was formed for Irish Protestant Unionists, and for the first time in the twentieth century, a Division based on sectarian and political lines took to the field. With the full approbation of Bonar Law, Carson proclaimed, at the formation of this division September 24, 1914: "When the War is over we will call our Provincial Government together and we will repeal the Home Rule Bill as far as it concerns us in ten minutes. All our Ulster Volunteers are going to kick out everybody who tries to

put it in force in Ulster." Speaking of the illegal Ulster Volunteers which he intended maintaining throughout the War, he added: "I will never consent to a single gun leaving Ireland." Similar sentiments were expressed by the General Officer Commanding the 86th Division. While the Ulster Division was allowed to talk treason, Kitchener refused to accept Redmond's offer that Irishmen should defend Ireland, and likewise vetoed the further offer that the Irish Volunteers be taken over as an Irish Territorial Force. Even when the Irish Tenth Division and the Irish Sixteenth Division were eventually formed, the mere Irish were neither trusted nor respected by the War Office. The Sixteenth Division was refused permission to have an Irish flag. While the rank and file of this Division were about 95 per cent Catholic, out of the four hundred odd original officers only three were Catholic and they were subalterns. The preternaturally patient John Redmond, having borne all these insults in silence for fifteen months, eventually published them to a surprised world in the British Commons on Nov. 2, 1915. The Irish like the Sepoys must be officered by the representatives of Empire. When they fought and with reckless bravery lost their lives, as the Tenth Division did at Gallipoli, the incompetent British General in Command of the operations refused even to mention them in his despatches. What was Ireland to do? She had fought for England under Wellington, so well that he said that "It is mainly to the Irish Catholics that we owe all our proud predominance in our military career," and yet the same Wellington flouted the unarmed Irish nation at Clontarf and saw the veterans of the Peninsular War die of starvation during the Great Famine. Was Ireland to give her life's blood to England during this War, and have as the highest possible reward, merely provincial parliaments with partition?

NATIONAL AND ULSTER VOLUNTEERS

The Sinn Feiners said: "No. We are under no obligation, to England, till England fulfills her obligations to us." Redmond and the Nationalists judged differently. The Allied cause was just. Therefore Ireland must fight for it. Ireland thus began to fight for her own enemy, against the enemy of Europe. Though treated as an inferior race not fit to be trusted or to officer its own men, the Irish joined the British army. Up to October 1915, 27,954 National Volunteers had joined the colors. They had done as well as the Ulster Volunteers, for though 215,000 people signed the Ulster Covenant, and though they were permitted to make the Ulster Division as Orange as an Orange Lodge, only 27,412 Ulster Volunteers had joined the colors by 9th October, 1915. It was only in that

week, 14 months after the War began, that the Ulster Division left England and it was on July 1, 1916, twenty-three months after the War began that it entered a real battle. Long before that date the Irish Sixteenth Division had faced German gas from Loos to Hulluch and the Irish Tenth Division had in the previous year, fought under fearful odds in Gallipoli in the heat of summer and in Serbia in the snows of winter. Armed Orangemen may have talked much about "No Surrender" before there was a war, but significantly enough the first Irish regiment to practice this doctrine, as was so bravely done at Etreux, on August 29, 1914, were the Munsters.

IN SPITE OF "MALIGNITY" IRELAND LED CANADA

Official figures have never been given showing Ireland's total military contribution to the War. The official number of recruits accepted for the Army was 185,069. This does not include those who joined the navy, nor does it include the 81,000 Irish regular soldiers who were already in the army at the outbreak of War. These various classes bring up the number of native born Irishmen from Ireland who were in the British forces during the War to over 195,000. In addition over 50,000 volunteered but were rejected as medically unfit. This is proportionately a higher number of soldiers than the number of native born Canadians who enlisted during the War. In the British House of Commons on October 19, 1916, John Redmond stated that the number of men in the Army and Navy from Ireland was 167,000 of whom 100,000 were Catholics. These men had enlisted in spite of the British bureaucracy, which not merely refused to acknowledge the Irish nation, but in many instances actually discouraged the enlisting of Irish Nationalists lest Ireland get credit therefrom. These Unionists were willing to be "traitors to England that they might be tyrants to Ireland." It was to this Lloyd George referred when he stated in the House of Commons that same day: "Some of the stupidities which sometimes almost look like malignity which were perpetrated at the beginning of recruiting in Ireland are beyond belief."

IRELAND'S WAR EFFORT UNPARALLELED

There are some who belittle Ireland's war effort. To my mind, it is not merely wonderful, it is unparalleled in the history of the world. I know of no other instance in the history of Europe, where over 100,000 men of the subject race volunteered to fight for their own conqueror, because he was engaged in a just war. It is a great thing to lay down your life for your friends, but an incomparably greater thing to lay down your life for your enemies. The reward was in proportion to the sacrifice. The leading

official of the conqueror in Ireland today, instead of proclaiming to the world that nigh 200,000 Irishmen fought for democracy, would justify his own denial of democracy by the lie that there are in Ireland 200,000 men ready to commit murder. I say this is a great reward; for the highest reward a Christian can receive is to be insulted for doing good.

SOME HUMAN NATURE IN IRISHMEN

It would be superhuman for the whole Irish race to have maintained this unselfish martyrdom for five years. To begin with, a considerable section of the Irish nation, the Unionists, were never called upon to play the role, as they fought for their friend, and for a continuation of their own ascendancy. Another section of the Irish race, the Sinn Feiners, considered the role of martyrdom to be national suicide, and refused to enlist. Some few, like Patrick Pearse, feared that Irish Nationalism would disappear altogether and would be succeeded by an anti-national Imperialism, unless active opposition was made to the Empire. Hence he proposed, and eventually proclaimed, a rebellion, which would, as he foresaw, fail militarily but succeed morally, through the revival of strong nationalism which it provoked.

KNEW PATRICK PEARSE

I knew Patrick Pearse and am proud to have known him. It is sixteen years since I first met him at the Connacht Feis in Galway. For years I read his inspiring editorials in Irish and English in the *Claidheamh Soluis*. That was before he entered politics. He was one of the noblest and most idealistic teachers this century has produced. His charm can best be seen in *Iosagan*, a volume of Irish tales, which are a proof that Irish literature can be written even by some who learn Irish when they are already adults. Carson's adoption of physical force changed the patriotic teacher into the revolutionist. I just missed seeing Pearse in Dublin in August 1914. He wrote me that he had left for the West. A fortnight later I learned that in the very first month of the War he favored seizing Dublin Castle as an act of national self-assertion. He was so engrossed with Ireland's national wrongs that he failed to read the international situation aright. When finally in Easter 1916, he learned that Dublin Castle intended to disarm the Irish Volunteers and gaol their leaders he led a thousand Irish Volunteers against the three million soldiers of the British Army.

MORAL EFFECT OF IDEALIST'S REBELLION

Pearse made the streets of Dublin red with blood,

first because he considered that constitutional agitation would at most obtain for Ireland a provincial status; secondly, because he saw it cheated even of this fruit by armed resistance of Carson's volunteers; and thirdly, because he believed that the only way to convince his own country (and the world) that Ireland must have all the rights of a sovereign nation, was to proclaim and establish an Irish Republic. As his volunteers were practically unarmed, and as his only hope of getting arms was from a German source, he formed an alliance with Germany, despite the fact that four hundred thousand men of Irish blood were then fighting Prussian militarism. The German ship with its cargo of arms was intercepted, and the rebellion easily put down, but by his very failure Pearse succeeded in one of his main objects. He made the majority of the people of Ireland almost within a month Sinn Feiners. The reason of this fundamental change was the belief that, while 170,000 Irishmen of Ireland had fought for the liberties of the Continents of Europe and Asia, their unselfish heroism had not moved England to grant Irishmen at home the liberties for which they were fighting abroad. On the other hand, Pearse and Connolly, the Poet and the Labourite, who had been executed by British soldiers because they tried to set Ireland free, were by popular consent numbered among Ireland's national martyrs.

The British Cabinet, thoroughly excited by the rebellion, first destroyed Castle Rule, and then re-established it; at first offered a temporary partition, and then, when it was accepted by Redmond and Carson, nullified the offer by altering the terms. Ireland drew breath more freely when she saw that politicians had failed to dismember her. Redmond, in accepting temporary partition, did so in spite of the opposition of the Ulster bishops, and without the consent of the Irish people.

NATIONALISM OUT OF TOUCH WITH IRELAND

The Nationalist Party, which before Easter week, had been willing to postpone a settlement of the Irish question till after the War, believing that the Government of Ireland Act of 1914 and Ireland's 100,000 Catholic soldiers were a sufficient guarantee that she would get national autonomy, now realized that the nation did not approve of this one-sided bargain, but rather demanded a delivery of the goods. So the party asked for immediate Home Rule. Lloyd George, now Premier, offered in March 1917, nothing but partition. Redmond, in protest, asked whether the Ulster minority were to have power over the majority for ever. The Nationalists then appealed to the United States and to the Dominions to apply Wilson's principles to Ireland.

The United States was on the point of entering the War, so the Government saw fit to announce on March 22, that it had decided to make another attempt at a settlement. Meanwhile, on April 19, Sinn Fein held a convention in Dublin declared Ireland's right to complete independence, and demanded representation at the Peace Congress. The Irish Catholic bishops now learned that the Government's new plan was merely partition, and in a joint manifesto signed also by three Protestant bishops, called upon Irishmen of every creed, class, and party, to prevent their country being made a new Poland. As a result of this protest, the Sinn Feiners won South Longford, and the Government's partition policy published a week later (May 1917), was rejected by the Nationalist Party. The Bishops had saved Ireland from partition.

THE IRISH CONVENTION

The Government put forward as an alternative proposition a Convention of Irishmen to draft a scheme of Irish self-government. A new chapter in contemporary Irish history now began. By granting this Irish Convention, England thereby admitted Ireland's right to self-determination. Sinn Fein immediately demanded that the instrument of self-determination be adequate, namely, that the Convention be free to choose complete independence if it wish, that the English Government pledge itself to the United States and the Powers to ratify the decision of the majority of the Convention, and that the Convention consist of none but persons freely elected by adult suffrage in Ireland. All their demands were refused, so Sinn Fein refused to recognize the Convention.

SINN FEIN AS A POLITICAL FACTOR

To provide an atmosphere of good-will the Government released June 17, (1917) all the Rebellion prisoners. The leader of these a young Irish-speaking schoolmaster, Eamonn de Valera, presented himself as the Republican candidate in Clare, to fill the vacancy caused by the death in action of Major Willie Redmond. By a majority of 8,000 Clare voted for de Valera and an Irish Republic. Kilkenny City followed Clare's example. In October the Government raided and seized the arms of the National (i. e. Constitutional or Redmondite) Volunteers, though the Ulster Volunteers were left in undisturbed possession of 50,000 German rifles. Questioned in the House, on October 23, (1917) the Chief Secretary (Mr. Duke) said that "The young men of Ireland—200,000 of them—are being enrolled for the purpose of creating a new Rebellion in Ireland." Two days later Sinn Fein held a convention in Dublin, with 1,700 delegates, representing over 1,000 clubs.

and a membership of a quarter of a million. The convention passed a constitution, the essential clause of which is the following: "Sinn Fein aims at securing the international recognition of Ireland as an independent Irish Republic, and shall make use of any and every means available to render impotent the power of England to hold Ireland in subjection by military force or otherwise." It was decided to appeal to the Peace Congress.

CONVENTION IN SESSION

Meanwhile the Government's Irish Convention had been sitting. Practically all interests in Ireland, except Sinn Fein, were therein represented. It opened in Trinity College on July 28, 1917, and began by electing Sir Horace Plunkett, Chairman. The Southern Unionists agreed to a modified form of Home Rule for the whole of Ireland, but the Ulster Unionists refused all overtures from their fellow-Irishmen, even scorning to accept the proposal of the leading Protestant in Ireland, the Protestant Archbishop of Armagh, who advocated the Canadian plan of both federal and provincial parliaments, that is a national Parliament for the whole of Ireland and provincial parliaments for Ulster and the other provinces. Thereupon, Mr. Lysaght, a Dominion Home Ruler, in a letter of resignation warned the Government: "Every country to which the principle of self-determination is to be applied has within its borders a minority opposed to its national freedom. Is Ireland alone to be dominated by that minority, which, it must be remembered, has been offered in Ireland, concessions and safeguards unprecedented in any democratic country in the world? The time has surely come for the Government to prove to the Irish people that fullest self-government is not only possible, but certain, for Nationalists within the bounds of the British Empire; otherwise, they need not be surprised if an increasing number of Irishmen refuse to accept anything short of complete separation."

John Redmond did not live to see the end of the Irish Convention; he died on March 6, 1918. I had the sad privilege of saying Mass in the presence of his dead body in Westminster Cathedral.

REPORT OF CONVENTION WASTE PAPER TO LLOYD GEORGE

The report of the Irish Convention, a very valuable document, was finally laid on the Table of the House of Commons on April 7. It was found that the fundamental proposition establishing an Irish Parliament, consisting of King, Irish Senate, and Irish House of Commons, was agreed to by all except the Ulster Unionists. Lloyd George, without reading the report announced to the House of Com-

mons "That the majority was not such as to justify the Government in saying that it represents substantial agreement. Therefore, the Government would take the responsibility of submitting to Parliament such proposals for the establishment of self-government in Ireland as they thought 'just'." By these words, in effect, the Premier threw the report of the Irish Convention, and the principle of national self-determination upon which it was based, into the waste paper basket. Many suspect that the Premier's motive in creating an Irish Convention, which he foredoomed to failure by making it a mere sitting society and by demanding practical unanimity, was to deceive the Americans, lest the Irish Question dampen their war ardor.

STATEMENTS WORTH RECALLING

One written statement of Lloyd George to the chairman of the Irish Convention is worth recording, as it condemns in advance his present partition bill: "The only hope of agreement," he wrote on 25th February, 1918, "lies in a solution which provides for the unity of Ireland under a single Legislature with adequate safeguards."

The same day that he rejected the report of the Irish Convention, the Premier introduced a Bill to conscribe the whole manhood of Ireland (in its first draft priests also were included) from eighteen to fifty-one years. He coupled to this proposal of universal and immediate Conscription, a promise of some form of self-government, for, he added, "when the young men of Ireland had been brought in large numbers into the fighting line, it is important that they should feel that they are not fighting for the purpose of establishing a principle abroad which is denied them at home."

RESISTANCE TO CONSCRIPTION SPIRITED AND DETERMINED

His promise of some vague form of Home Rule at some future date was received with derisive incredulity. His attempt to conscribe Ireland met with the same opposition in that country which a similar proposal on the part of the British Parliament would have met in Canada, Australia or South Africa. The Military Service Act, nevertheless, was passed on April 16, and the Nationalist Party left Westminster. The menace of Conscription drew together all Irish parties, except the Unionists. A convention of leaders was called for April 18, at the Mansion House, by the Lord Mayor of Dublin. After consulting with the Irish Bishops, who were holding a meeting the same day at Maynooth; the Mansion House Conference issued the following declaration: "Taking our stand on Ireland's separate and distinct nationhood, and affirming the principle

of liberty, that the Governments of nations derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, we deny the right of the British Government or of any external authority to impose compulsory military service in Ireland against the clearly expressed will of the Irish people. The passing of the Conscription Bill by the British House of Commons must be regarded as a declaration of war on the Irish nation. The alternative to accepting it as such is to surrender our liberties and acknowledge ourselves slaves. It is in direct violation of the rights of small nationalities to self-determination which even the Prime Minister of England—now preparing to employ naked militarism and force his Act upon Ireland—himself officially announced as an essential condition for peace at the Peace Conference. The attempt to enforce it will be an unwarranted aggression, which we call upon all Irishmen to resist by the most effective means at their disposal." The bishops simultaneously published the following statement: "In view especially of the historic relation between the two countries from the very beginning to this moment, we consider that Conscription forced in this way upon Ireland is an oppressive and inhuman law, which the Irish people have a right to resist by every means consonant with the law of God." The Orange Solemn League and Covenant of 1912 had its counterpart in the anti-conscription pledge administered at the Catholic Church doors in Ireland, April 21, 1918. A Protestant protest against Conscription was organized unofficially. The Protestant Archbishops evaded the question by appealing for recruits. Meanwhile, the voice of Labour made itself felt at an All-Ireland Labour Conference, held also on April 21, which unanimously opposed Conscription, demanded for Ireland the independent status as a nation, and recommended their cause to their brothers in the Labour movement throughout the world. Two days later, Labour successfully organized a general strike throughout the whole of Ireland except North East Ulster and the Belfast-Dublin railway line.

RESISTANCE JUSTIFIED

Looking at the Conscription question at this distance of time and space it is hard not to justify Ireland's resistance. I was in the British House of Commons when it was introduced, and I felt that a greater blow had been struck at the British Empire by this action of Lloyd George and his Tories than by the German defeat of the Fifth Army which was its alleged excuse. There are only two ways of governing a nation: by consent of the governed, or by Prussianism. To have enforced Conscription in Ireland would have been the same as Prussianism. England refrained from creating an interminable civil war which

would weaken her both militarily and morally. So a recruiting appeal was launched under the threat of Conscription, and martial law was bitterly enforced. I visited Ireland at this time and it was the oddest recruiting campaign I ever saw. People under Martial Law don't usually volunteer. Even the Orangemen, who had everything to gain by a victory of England, refused to enlist. Indeed during the last years of the War, Ulster did not give enough recruits to replace the wastage of her Division. To keep it up to strength, Irish Catholic battalions were added to it from the Irish Sixteenth Division. Fifty thousand Ulster Protestants enlisted during the whole War, though 215,000 pledged themselves to fight against the Empire if Home Rule passed. Carson's Orange Free State did well during the War, but it has no right to depreciate the equally good record of the rest of Ireland. The Orangemen, like the Sinn Feiners, and unlike the Nationalists, did not trust England. They kept their own illegal Volunteers armed and intact throughout the whole War. It is the latent pressure of this armed force of the Orangemen which is today the determining factor in the Irish situation. An interesting chapter could be written on "Ourselves Alone" in Ulster. When these Orange Sinn Feiners join the Irish Sinn Feiners, England will have as little power over Ireland as she has over Canada. To prevent such a consummation, the Ascendancy Class must in all haste partition Ireland. All talk of two races in Ireland is humbug. The so-called homogeneous "Ulster" of the Unionists does not exist. The introduction of proportional representation, despite the protests of Carson's party, into the recent Irish Municipal elections gave Derry, the second Orange capital, a Sinn Fein mayor. Ulster, apart from the city of Belfast, is in majority Catholic and anti-Unionists. In the so-called six county area, four of those counties with Derry City have combined a Nationalist or anti-Unionist majority. To maintain an Ascendancy where "No Catholic need apply," the old wicked maxim—Divide and Rule—is to be applied to Ireland.

LLOYD GEORGE'S MOTIVE

This is the motive behind Lloyd George's partition bill. This carves out of Ireland a country which may be called "Carsonshire," gives to this Carsonshire and to the truncated body of Ireland petty provincial parliaments and demands that this divided Ireland pay as an annual tribute to the Imperial master eighty-seven million dollars. That Britain may be sure of getting this toll, she herself holds control of Irish Customs, Excise and Income Taxes. Needless to say, the vivisected Ireland will not be allowed to have a Militia. If she had soldiers of her own, as had every other

nation under the sun, she might be unreasonable enough to insist on enjoying all the rights of a free nation. Ireland is not even to have the privilege of saying where the surgeon's knife will enter her body. Two counties, Tyrone and Fermanagh, and the borough of Derry, which have a Nationalist or Sinn Fein majority, are, against the will of both the nation and of the local majority, to be added to Carson's pound of flesh. Armagh, the See of St. Patrick, will no longer be Ireland. The vivisection will cut the heart from the body of the nation. A purely illusory means of reunion is proposed. These English Solomons want actually to divide the living Irish child into two and wish the world to admire them for their wise partition.

PARTITION OF NATIONS AND DISRUPTION OF EMPIRES

The world remembers the partition of Poland; the world remembers that the three strongest Empires on the Continent of Europe, as three Imperial eagles or vultures, fed on the prostrate body of Poland for a century and a half; and the world remembers that less than two years ago these three Empires were broken to pieces and the once partitioned Poland resurrected into a sovereign nation. It is some satisfaction to note, however, that the future rulers of England, the Labor Party, repudiate this proposed crime of the Coalition Tories. This proposed partition which Bonar Law complacently calls Home Rule, is a much greater denial of Irish nationality than is the present Union. For the Union, while it puts the Irish Nation under the control of England, nevertheless recognizes the existence of the nation it subjects. The King is sovereign of Great Britain and Ireland, that is of two nations. The Irish nation he rules, through a Viceroy, through an Irish Executive Government and an Irish Privy Council. All the local Government boards and departments, whether under popular or under government control—are national. Dublin Castle itself is a proof of Irish nationality, for only a nation can be a subject nation. Even the 87 coercion acts of the nineteenth century bear witness that the island of Ireland is one nation. Ireland is not merely one administrative unit, she is also one judicial unit, with her own national judiciary, under an Irish Lord Chancellor. This judiciary is of course appointed by the conqueror. The educational system, from the Irish National schools to the Irish National University, is again a recognition of the nation it was originally intended to denationalise. The Churches of Ireland, both Catholic and Protestant, also witness that all Ireland is one nation. The Episcopalians call themselves the Church of Ireland, the Presbyterians, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and the Irish Catholic

bishops unite in National synods. I make no appeal to the geographical or the historical arguments which are conclusive in favor of Ireland a nation. Only contemporary history concerns me tonight. I maintain that the very machinery of the Union recognizes in a hundred ways that Ireland is one national unit. To prevent that nation from ever enjoying the political rights of a nation, England is now engaged in partitioning Ireland. She forgets that she cannot hurt Ireland without hurting herself. She forgets that the history of Europe since 1918 shows that the partition of nations usually ends in the disruption of Empires. For nations survive empires. Empires were made by men, but nations by God. There is room both for England and for Ireland in the world. Each has her cultural mission to perform, and neither can perform hers fully unless both be friends.

BOHEMIA—A PARALLEL

I will conclude this sketch of Ireland's political history since the armed Orangemen successfully defied the British Parliament six years ago at Larne, with a comparison with Bohemia. Austria united the crown of Bohemia to hers in 1526. Henry VIII. assumed the title of King of Ireland in 1541. Just as there were English colonists in Ireland before Henry VIII's time, so there were German colonists in Bohemia before the battle of Mohacz. There was this difference, however. In the early sixteenth century, in nineteen-twentieths of Ireland the Norman, Welsh, Saxon and English colonists had been absorbed into the Irish nation, while in a large part of Bohemia, German language and culture had already been paramount for centuries. Prague, the capital of Bohemia, was the seat of the first German University in the Middle Ages. In the nineteenth century Ireland demanded Home Rule of England, and Bohemia demanded Home Rule of Austria. The British and Austrian Empires refused. In the World-War, Austria conscribed Bohemia to fight for her, and England first cajoled and then tried to conscribe Ireland to fight for her. At the eleventh hour, Austria offered Bohemia Home Rule. It was too late; the Czecks declared a Czech-Slovak Republic. At the present hour England offers Ireland a mockery of Home Rule, containing deadly partition. It is scorned by the majority of the elected representatives of the Irish nation who claim that they constitute the Dail Eireann, or Parliament of the Irish Republic. There are three million and a half Germans in the Czech-Slovak State. Large parts of that State have a German majority and are contiguous to Germany or Austria. Was Bohemia partitioned because the minority did not want to leave the German union? By no

means. Lloyd George agreed with Wilson and Clemenceau that the historic unity of the Bohemian state must be recognized, despite the large section colonized by the German conqueror. The Germans of Bohemia are three times more numerous than the Unionists of Ireland, and like the latter they have held for centuries a political, commercial, social and religious ascendancy. Yet this ascendancy party in Bohemia must now bow to the forces of democracy and nationality.

GENERAL SMUT'S PROPHECY

I will conclude this comparison with the words of the greatest Dominion statesman in the British Empire, one of the really constructive forces at the Peace Conference, Lt.-General Jan Christian Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa:

"Our statesmen in Paris dealt with racial problems resembling that of Ireland, and in every way as difficult as the Irish problem, and they may not shrink from applying to Ireland the same medicine they applied to Bohemia and many other parts of Europe. Unless it is settled on the great principles which form the basis of the Empire, this Empire must cease to exist."

SUPPORT IRELAND'S JUST DEMAND

I appeal to all who care for the British Empire, to all who support democracy and hate ascendancy, to all who cherish patriotism and love liberty, to support the just, national demand of undivided Ireland for a government of her own choice.

For it is imperative that the present cruel martial law in Ireland, with the unlawful reprisals it provokes, should forthwith cease. It is imperative, not merely for the sake of Ireland, not merely for the sake of England, not merely for the sake of the British Empire, but also for the sake of the whole League of civilized Nations. For

"No flags are fair, if Freedom's flag be furled."

The whole of the human brotherhood suffers from a wrong done to any member. Christianity is not practised when brother hates or harms brother. May the saint who was chosen by God to be the greatest benefactor of the Irish race, our own glorious apostle St. Patrick, obtain of God, by his powerful intercession, peace and justice for the land he converted to Christ.



